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land, the Rhine trip, the Passion Play, Switzerland and Paris, before arriving at Brussels. As it would be possible to reach Boston in time for this steamer from the Mackinac conference, some members may desire to arrange for passage on this trip, which is also in charge of the Bureau of University Travel.

Those interested should write to Miss Katharine L. Swift, care of Bureau of University Travel, Trinity Place, Boston, Mass., who is a member of the A. L. A. Travel Committee.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Federal and State Relations

Early in the month of November, the attention of the Committee was called to the fact that certain practices of the publishers of magazines appeared to be contrary to the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. The matter together with the evidence which the Committee was able to obtain, was laid before the Department of Justice, which reported that there was no ground for instituting a prosecution, unless additional evidence should appear. The Committee is informed that a similar effort has been made independently of it, by Wm. H. Brett, librarian of the Cleveland Public Library, and that no final decision has been given with reference to the evidence submitted by him.

The Committee communicated with the Chairman of the Committee on Post Office and Post Roads in the House of Representatives, the Hon. John W. Weeks of Massachusetts, asking that the favorable provision with reference to extending the privilege of second class postage to libraries, which was embodied in the bill introduced by Mr Overstreet in the last Congress, be renewed in the bill to be introduced at this Session. Our attention has been called to the fact that libraries which are a part of the City Government and have not a separate board of trustees, are not entitled to second class rates under the existing law, and it is suggested that librarians of such libraries also write to Mr Weeks urging upon him the inclusion of the provisions of the

bill introduced by Mr Overstreet.

Bernard C. Steiner,
Chairman.

Bookbinding

The firm of E. P. Dutton & Co. has decided to issue a special library edition of Everyman's Library. All the books in this library will be bound practically according to the specifications of the A. L. A. Committee on Binding. The entire library may be obtained in cloth at the uniform rate of 35 cents a volume, or in half pigskin at 60 cents a volume. The advantages of these books are many.

1. It brings within the means of the smallest library the best literature of all times.

2. The books will be so strongly bound that they will never need to be rebound. When necessary to withdraw from circulation they can be thrown away and new copies purchased.

3. They occupy very little space and are so cheap, so durable and artistic that the large libraries may find it advantageous to get a large number of duplicates of the more popular titles.

4. The fact that the special edition will be kept in stock and can be obtained at short notice adds largely to its value.

Harper Brothers sometime ago bound in the special library binding copies of the following:

Cruise of Canoe Club.
Prince and Pauper.
Boys of '76.
Little Lame Prince.
Canoemates.
Toby Tyler.
Ben Hur.

About half of the number of copies so bound are still in stock, and can be purchased either from Harper direct or through regular agents. Care must be taken, however, to specify the special library binding. Otherwise, the regular edition will be furnished.

A. L. Bailey,
Chairman.

Bookbuying

The librarian of a public library is a custodian of public funds, which are to be

expended for the benefit of the community. Economy in the use of the book fund results in greater purchasing power for that fund, and hence greater usefulness for the library. The following suggestions, although embodying little that is new, may serve to summarize the various opportunities for economy.

The secret, it may be called a secret, of buying books cheaply is to buy them when they are cheap. When a book is first issued it is priced high, chiefly because the author and publisher wish to take advantage of the insistent demand for the very newest thing, the very latest story, or an account of the very latest event. The public is fickle, it soon loses interest in a subject, some later occurrence attracting its attention. Librarians must to a certain extent yield to the demand for the newest book, but in doing so, in many instances, by the mere act of yielding, they discourage the reading of much better books which would otherwise be read. This is especially true of fiction. The demand for the newest novel often leads the librarian or book committee to put into circulation novels that are trashy, or even "off color," simply because they are not examined carefully before circulation.

The "best sellers" are popular principally because they are so thoroughly advertised. Their price is high because the artificially stimulated demand is in most cases soon satisfied. Few of these popular novels are in demand after a year from the time that they are issued.

There is great advantage in waiting before purchasing new novels. In the first place, an opportunity is offered for the careful reading of reviews, a careful examination of the book itself, and the consequent elimination of the immoral, the trifling, and above all, the dull. In the second place, it gives an opportunity to purchase cheaply. The control of the price by the publisher terminates at the end of a year, and the bookseller then has the right, previously denied him, of selling the book at any price he sees fit. Any novel of lasting merit is more than

likely to be re-issued, often on better paper, shortly after the year has expired, and these reprints sell at from one third to one half the original price. Hundreds of the best novels can now be bought in this reprint or "rebind form," and only the most interesting ones are likely to survive long enough to make such reissues profitable.

What is true of fiction is true of such books as biographies, travel books, sets of standard authors, and histories. Such serious books as these should make up the major proportion of the purchases of a public library, but the necessity for their purchase at the time of publication is often slight, and the opportunities for saving money by waiting are greater. It is often possible to save as much as seventy-five per cent of the cost by waiting.

One reason for waiting is found in the practice of issuing the first edition of a book at a high price, often in a subscription edition, following it at a short interval by a cheaper edition. Often the cheaper edition is better suited to library uses. No better example could be given of this practice than the editions of standard American authors issued by a certain publisher. The subscription editions are sold at five dollars per volume, with practically no discount. The later editions, printed sometimes from the same plates, are sold for a dollar and a half per volume. The text of these editions is the same, and the cheaper volumes are handier in size for circulation. The purchase of one of these cheaper sets, allowing for discounts, leaves enough from the price of the subscription edition to purchase three more sets.

Nor does this apply solely to American authors. Certain publishing houses make a practice of issuing limited or "de luxe" editions of the works of nearly every popular author all over the world. The large price of these editions is not due to the beauty of printing, binding and illustration alone, nor to the cost of superior paper, but rather to the cost of selling by the subscription method. In buying such sets, the purchaser pays for the large

cost of selling. After the "quick profit" has been made by the publisher, he is very willing to sell the whole stock on hand at cost or less than cost, to "clear up." These "subscription remainders" are then sold by certain dealers at a small percentage of the original price.

Even standard reference books can be obtained at a smaller price by waiting. Nearly every one of the general cyclopaedias can be bought for about one-half of the original subscription price, a few years after completion. Even the special cyclopaedias can be so bought. The Jewish cyclopaedia, issued at a rather high price, is now on the market for about one-half this cost.

The purchase of a book from travelling subscription agents is almost certain to be a waste of money. There are very few instances where one is not able to buy the same book, or even a better edition, at a less price, in many instances without waiting at all, by searching through printed catalogues and lists. The travelling agent receives from twenty-five to fifty per cent. commission. Often it happens that the identical sets offered were bought from "remainder" dealers, from whom the librarian can buy direct. In many instances, there is great misrepresentation. It is always a safe plan not to give an order for a subscription book or set without the fullest investigation, and to require a reasonable time to investigate the statements of the agent.

A source of great economy in purchasing is the selection of books from the catalogs of the "circulating libraries" in Great Britain. These libraries are on a scale unheard of in this country, and are as important in controlling the circulation of books in England as any other agency. Within six months of the date of publication of a book, these libraries find themselves empowered to sell their surplus stock at low prices. It is well worth while to obtain their catalogs, and examine them regularly. The prices are often as small as one-fourth of the original price, and the copies sold, although

they have been used, are generally in good condition.

The catalogs of dealers in second-hand books may with profit be examined from time to time for bargains. Especially are sets of standard authors to be looked for. These are often in the better printed editions made before the days of poor paper and binding. Similar bargains may be picked up at auction sales, although the inexperienced purchaser may often be led to pay more than the market price unless he carefully looks up prices beforehand. Bidding at auction sales should be made through an agent, to whom a small commission may be paid, rather than direct to the auctioneer. The reason for this is evident; it is to the advantage of the auctioneer to start the bidding at as high a point as possible, should yours be the only bid, you will probably pay nearly the price you have set for your outside limit. The better way is to employ an agent, and pay him a commission, not on the price for which you obtain the book, but on the highest price you bid. It is then a matter of pride for the agent to obtain the lowest price.

Every library which buys five hundred dollars worth of books a year should subscribe for the Bookseller or the Publisher's circular, published in London. The cost of many books is much lower in England. It is possible for the small library, by importing duty-free, through one of the regular New York importers, to save quite a percentage of the cost on many books. The only extra work required is the signing of an affidavit, before a notary, and a receipt after the books are delivered.

To summarize the possible economies:

Order no book without carefully considering whether it may well be omitted altogether; whether its purchase may not be delayed; whether it may not be obtained cheaper abroad than in the United States; whether it may not be found at a cheaper price from dealers in "remainders," or in a cheaper edition. Do not buy from travelling agents except after the most careful examination of the claims of

the agents. Spend a large part of your time in examining catalogs. Do not forget that you can do no good work without proper tools, and so provide yourself with the regular trade catalogs, and such of the helps as you can afford. To epitomize, put the same time and thought in your purchasing as you spend in taking care of them after bought.

W. P. Cutter.

THE EDITOR'S TABLE

(Appropriate current library literature will be noted in this column if sent to Chalmers Hadley, 1 Washington St., Chicago, Ill.)

Binghamton public library. List of books in the teachers' library. 8p. 1909.

Brooklyn public library. Samuel Johnson, 1709-1784. A list of books with references to periodicals in the Brooklyn public library. 18p. 1909.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes, 1809-1894.

A list of books with references to periodicals in the Brooklyn public library. 16p. 1909.

Connecticut public library commission.

Document no. 3, 1909. Helps in library work with children. 6p. 1909.

—Document no. 4, 1909. Novels and children's stories of 1908-9. 4p. 1909.

Enoch Pratt free library. Twenty-fourth annual report of the librarian to the Board of trustees for the year 1909. 91p. 1910.

Washington (D. C.) public library. Lists; Aeronautics, arts and crafts, automobiles, carpentry, ghost stories, lettering and sign painting, machine shop work, mechanical drawing, painting and varnishing. 1909.

Kansas City public library quarterly. v. 10, no. 1. 1910. Contains a bibliography of waterways.

Knights of Columbus, Toledo Council, no. 386. List of Catholic books in the Toledo public library. 28p. 1909. Can be obtained from the Toledo public library.

Library of Congress. Publications issued since 1897. 48p. 1910.

Maryland state library commission. Seventh annual report. 131p. 1909. Contains report of field secretary, reports of libraries in Maryland in 1909, historical

sketches of libraries in Maryland, report on traveling libraries, etc.

New York state library. The translation and publication of the manuscript Dutch records of New Netherland, with an account of previous attempts at translation. 28p. 1910. (Education Dep't. Bulletin of Bibliography 46).

North Dakota public library commission.

Suggestive lists of books for public school libraries issued for circulation by the North Dakota public library commission 1909. 21p. 1909.

Portland (Ore.) library association bulletin. New ser., v. 7, no. 2. Feb. 1910. Contains a list of interesting biographies and letters of English women.

St. Louis public library monthly bulletin. New ser., V. 7, no. 9. Nov. 1909. Contains a list of thirty-two Yiddish books.

—New ser. v. 8, no. 2. Contains lists of books on folk lore and forestry.

Scranton public library. Annual report for the year ending 1909. 16p. 1910.

Stevens Institute of Technology. Annual catalog. 253p. 1910. Contains lists of books in mechanics and engineering.

Stewart, J. D. How to use a library. 83p. D. 1910. 2s. net. How to use a library by J. D. Stewart is published primarily for the use of the English reading public. It is of attractive appearance and gives practical advice to students and general readers, explanations of library catalogs, a systematic description of guides to books and a guide to special libraries.

SOME PUBLICATIONS WORTH WHILE

The demand for publications of the A. L. A. Publishing Board varies greatly. Some of the publications are so in demand that constant reprinting is necessary. Other publications of great value and importance seem to be overlooked. The attention of librarians and trustees is called to the following:

Small Library buildings. A collection of plans contributed by the League of Library Commissions, with an